

THE SANITARY BOARD.

The fortnightly meeting of the Sanitary Board was held this afternoon. Mr. E. H. May (Vice-President), Captain Superintendent of Police, presided; there were also present: Hon. F. A. Cooper, Director of Public Works; Dr. Hartigan, Mr. J. J. Francis, Q.C.; Mr. R. K. Leigh, and Mr. H. McCallum, Secretary.

SHEEP AND SWINE DEPOTS.
The report of the Committee of the Sanitary Board appointed at a meeting held on 31st January last to consider and advise on the management of the sheep and pig depots was read. The report recommended that the alterations of the depots with reference to the depots, the keeping of cattle, sheep, or pigs intended for slaughter be forbidden in any other place than the Government depots, and the withdrawal of the authority now vested in the Sanitary Board to license places for the keeping of cattle, sheep, and pigs, and slaughter, the Committee being of opinion that it was highly undesirable from a sanitary point of view that any house or place in the city, however well fitted, should be used for such purposes. The population was too dense to render it advisable. The Government depots were in the outskirts of the city, and so situated that there was no probability of the immediate neighbourhood becoming built upon, or over-crowded. The Committee also suggested the making of a second entrance as to give separate means for exit and entrance for the sheep and pigs.

Mr. Cooper said the sooner a proper superintendence was appointed the better. After some remarks it was agreed to adopt the bye-laws and forward them to the Government with a recommendation that they should be passed.

SECRETARY'S AND SUPERINTENDENT'S DUTIES.
It was agreed to suggest to the Government that the offices of Sanitary Superintendent and of the Sanitary Board should be separated, and that an officer should be appointed as Superintendent at an early date.

Mr. Cooper pressed urgency, and Mr. Francis suggested that the Vice-President should write.

THE REGULATION OF COMMON LODGING HOUSES.
The Acting Colonial Secretary (Mr. J. H. Stewart Lockhart) forwarded to the Sanitary Board a report by the Registrar General (Mr. J. H. Stewart Lockhart) on the subject of Common Lodging Houses By-laws.

The report was as follows:—I have the honour to report for the information of the Board the progress of the regulations for the registration of Common Lodging Houses have not been complied with by the persons whom they affect.

2. Previous to the date on which these regulations came into force, I carefully explained them to the masters and occupants of common lodging houses, or what are more commonly known as coo-lee houses, with a view to removing any misapprehension which might exist and to preventing any misunderstanding arising as to their object. That such misapprehension did exist was evident, for the head coolies and those who work under them were labouring under an erroneous impression that the regulations would have a bearing on the photographs of coolies would be required. In addition to orally informing representatives of the coolies that no fees would be charged and that no photographs would be required, I caused a Chinese notice to be drawn up to the same effect, and distributed to the numbers amongst the head men and coolies.

3. Having learned at the same time that a rumour was being spread that the ultimate object of the Government in introducing the regulations with regard to coo-lee houses was to levy a poll-tax on all Chinese residents in the Colony, I caused a contradiction of this baseless fabrication to be inserted in the Chinese notice and affixed a reward to any one who could furnish information which would lead to the discovery of the persons who had put the rumour in circulation. No one has as yet shown any desire to obtain the reward.

4. In addition to holding several interviews with head coolies and coolies, and notifying them as indicated, I also requested the leading Chinese merchants who are large employers of coolies to explain the position to their employees, and to sign notices to the effect that they would not be doing any business with the districts in China from which the coolies in Hongkong chiefly come to co-operate in the same direction. Both those parties report that they have complied with my request, but no head coolies have registered up to the present time.

5. In forwarding this report, I beg to point out that I have not consulted any of the European merchants, who, either through head coolies or compradors, in many instances employ large numbers of coolies. They could no doubt render valuable assistance in this matter, and I would suggest that before any proceedings are instituted, which I presume will be done at the instance of the Sanitary Board, they should be consulted either through the Chamber of Commerce or the Sanitary Board.

Appended were the following minutes:—
Dr. Hartigan.—It seems to me that the Registrar General has fully informed the Chinese as to the nature and object of the law, and it certainly should be enforced promptly else all recent sanitary regulations will be useless.

Mr. J. J. Francis, Q.C.—I am sorry to find, from this report, that no steps have been taken to enforce these laws. They came into operation, I think, on the 1st January, and had been in force for some time during the last two months. I was under the impression that it was to be enforced promptly. There has been too much negotiation and too great delay. The Chinese will simply despise us. I strongly deplore any negotiation through the European merchants and their compradors. The coolies and their headmen will look on it as a sign of weakness and indecision. The laws have been framed with every desire to bear as lightly as possible on the coolies and to consider their feelings and prejudices in every possible way, and they must now be enforced resolutely and to the letter.

Anything in the shape of a strike or disturbance takes place, the Government must be prepared to deport at once every head-man whose coolies go out on strike, no matter how much he may protest his ignorance. The market should be left to buyers at quotation. Nationals have improved to \$100 ex div. with sales.

MARINE INSURANCES.—Chinese. Traders have found better buyers at \$95 and close steady at that rate. Unions have improved to \$152, with sales, and Yangtzes have changed hands at \$90. Other Marines have been more or less neglected.

FIRE INSURANCES.—Hongkong. There found small investing buyers at \$176 and \$175 ex div. and others are sought for at quotation without finding sellers.

SINCE.—Hongkong, Canton, and Macao.—With the conclusion of the arrangement with the position, bonds have been raised to \$30, with sales at that and at \$28, \$29, and \$30; market closes firm at \$30. Indo-Chinese are in demand at

\$38, but none seem forthcoming. Dong-les are rather easier with sellers at \$31 ex div. China-Manila continues neglected. Mutuals rise steady at \$7 for preference.

REVENUES.—China Sugars are very much weaker, sellers ruling the market at \$140. The weakness is attributable to the declaration of a final dividend of 4 per cent, which is less than was anticipated.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Docks continue to change hands in small lots at 83 per prem. Lands have been in good demand and many shares have been taken by investors outside the colony. Green Islands have changed hands at \$6, Kowloon Wharfs at \$36, Watsons at \$34, and Penwicks at \$15.

Mining.—We have nothing to report except a rise in Balmoria to \$5.25, with sales at \$4.75, \$5, \$5.10 and \$5.25. Panjane have been taken at \$9 and Kauba at \$9.95 with sales.

WATER-COLOURS.
An application was made by Messrs. Leigh and Orange, on behalf of Messrs. D. Sanson Sons and Co., for permission to erect three water-closets in their offices.

Minutes.—Mr. J. J. Francis.—In order to comply with the recommendations of the Committee of the subject, I have been doing by the Board of Health last meeting there must be a full report on their promises showing facts from which the Board can come to the conclusion that these officers cannot be properly worked under the bucket system. It will require a very full and very clear report indeed to convince me that the duties required. If this application is granted every set of offices in Hongkong will have an equally good claim.

The Captain Superintendent of Police.—The premises sent to me to come under No. 1 of the recommendations of the Committee. The Director of Public Works.—These offices, I believe, to a large extent need by European.

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SANITARY SURVEYOR'S REPORT FOR 1894.
In his report for the past year, Mr. J. R. Crook stated:—

Plans for the redecoration of 252 houses were carried forward from 1893; plans for 875 houses were carried forward from 1892, making a total of 1,127 in hand during the year.

A total of 555 houses have been completed and the plans for 8 houses cancelled during the past year, leaving 567 still incomplete which are carried forward to 1895.

Certificates have been granted under Section 71 of Ordinance No. 24 of 1887, 46 houses as having been built in accordance with the provisions of that Ordinance.

The number of houses, 567, carried forward from last year is largely in excess of what has been in previous years. About one-third of these, however, are new buildings still in course of erection, while of the remainder a large portion are completed except for small repairs.

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Water-closets have been erected and connected to the house drains by permission of the Board or have been re-connected after the removal of the closets and drainage in the following premises:—Grand Stand, Race Course; Tramway Terminus, Garden Road; Bank House, Garden Road; Nos. 64 and 66, Queen's Road Central; Gie Works, Praya West; Remedios Terrace, Arbuthnot Road; Glenaleigh, Cairns Road; City Hall; and the Hongkong Club.

Some notice is called for here of the inaccuracies of deposited plans and of the failure to properly inspect work before calling in the Board's officers. It is but too clear that in the majority of cases no attempt is made before starting the work to see that the nature and object of the law, and it certainly should be enforced promptly else all recent sanitary regulations will be useless.

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